

# FAITH

DELIVERED TO THEM.

# S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D

At *Pauls Church* before the Right Honourable the LORD MAJOR, and Aldermen of the City of *LONDON*,  
F<sup>11</sup> L<sup>17</sup> 17. 1659.

By **JOHN TEMPLER, B.D.** late Fellow of  
Trinity Colledge in Cambridge, and now Minister  
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'Aḡaḡi' ḡ' ḡeḡ ḡiḡi ḡeḡḡiḡ. Heḡ.

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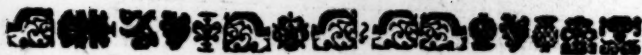


*Ireton Major.*

*Tuesday, the 26<sup>s</sup> of July, 1659.*

It is ordered that Mr. *Templer* be desired to  
print his late Sermon at *Pauls*.

SADLER.





TO THE  
RIGHT HONOURABLE  
THE LATE  
LORD MAIOR,  
AND  
The Court of Aldermen of the City  
of L O N D O N.

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Right Honourable, and Right Worshipful.



*In the printing what I lately ad-  
ventured to entertain you with,  
I have not followed the induce-  
ments of my own spirit, which  
(before I received your Com-  
mands) was not under the least  
Temptation to expose those slender Preparations  
to the publick view. What I was inabled through  
Mercy to deliver, was not intended for the  
Press,*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Press, which requires the most close Composure, but the Pulpit, which doth not disallow of a greater freedom; not for the eye, which is more critical, and quick to discern the least Incongruity, but the ear, which is less exact in weighing and giving its Judgement. My unwillingness to be guilty of an appearance of disregard to your Order, hath carried me out beyond my own private Inclinations to this Action. I am the more chearfull in it, by how much I am assured of the same favour from you in reading the Ensuing Discourse, which you were pleased to vouchsafe in the hearing. As for others, who will give themselves the trouble of perusing it, I have considered they are but of two sorts, either those which are sensible of their own Infirmities, or those which are not. The first (I presume) will pardon mine: The second (I suppose) will find no just reason to be displeased, if I take more encouragement in this Attempt from your acceptance, then discouragement from their Censures. Though a sense of the meanness of my performance keeps my hope at a low ebb; yet my desire is earnest, that he which hath chosen the weak things of the world, would exert himself, and so far accept my Endeavours



### The Epistle Dedicatory.

deavours, as to use them as shadows to commend the Excellency of his own power.

My intent is not to put any countenance upon vain Contentions, endless Controversies, perplexing Disputes, which waste pretious time, disquiet the people of God, drie up the spirit of Religion. Those sparks which issue from such kind of Discussions (considering the Disposition of the matter on every side to take fire) are more likely to put all into a violent Combustion, then enkindle in any the least flame of sincere love for the interest of the Gospel. The scope I aim at is to animate and provoke to a well temper'd zeal, a holy contending, a vigorous asserting of that faith, which is ingrossed in the Bible by the Spirit of God; sealed with the blood of Christ, delivered to the Saints, witnessed by Thousands of Martyrs. Those Acts of violence it hath sustained in the world, can have no other effect upon all, who love the Lord Iesus, then to engage them so far in its vindication. When the Levites concubine was divided into pieces, and dispersed through the coasts of Israel, all that saw it, thought themselves concerned to take advice, and declare their minds. As strange a spectacle we are dayly exercised with. The faith which Christ hath  
espoused.

### The Epistle Dedicatory.

*e* spoused as his own, we see dis-membred and mangled, distributed by Piece-meals through several Tribes and Parties, some having only the skin and outside, those matters which are most remote from the heart and life of Religion; others only the bones, the hard and controversial parts; but few in comparison the marrow and spirit. In these Circumstances no less than a Duty is incumbent upon you, and all the Israel of God to unite as one man in asserting of it, which indeed will be a crown to you, a Glory to the Christian profession, an Astonishment to the Adversary, and shall be his prayer, who is

Yours in all Christian Service,

JOHN TEMPLER.

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A  
S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D

At *Pauls Church* before the Right Honourable the LORD MAJOR, and Aldermen of the City of LONDON.

JULY 17. 1659.

JUD. 3. V.

*Earnestly contend for the Faith which was once delivered unto the Saints.*



IN the ninth verse of this Epistle, we find *Michael* the Arch-Angel contending for the body of *Moses*. In the words of the Text we are advised to contend for the soul and spirit of *Moses*, the Faith delivered to him and all the Saints.

However at the first appearance it may be judged unseasonable to press any thing, which looks towards  
Con-

Contention, at such a time, when the pool of *Bethesda* ordained for healing, is turned into the waters of strife, when men generally have better skill in Premises and Conclusions than in the Promises or Precepts of Christ: yet when I consider either those delusions, which lie upon the spirits of some, who contend for their own shadows in stead of the Faith delivered to the Saints, and think they imbrace the Goddess, when it is but a cloud upon their own understandings, or that sceptical frame that prevails upon the spirits of others, who by reason of the counterfeit money which is abroad, conceive it impossible to be assured of that which is current; who are as unresolved in divine concerns, as he was that did not know, whether to preferre the milk of the mother, or the blood of her son: or indeed that deadness which hath surpriz'd the hearts of most, how listless they are, when any thing lies before them which relates to the radical Truth of the Gospel; it pleads not only the conveniency, but the necessity of this advice. How many have lost their former heat and vigour, and are ready to dispute that Faith in defence of which they were once ready to die. Their hearts are become like the fountain at the Oracle of *Jupiter Hammon*; at midnight it was exceeding hot, about the rising of the Sun luke-warm, at noon time exceeding cold. When they were in a night of Persecution, their hearts were hot; when the day of deliverance approached, their heat abated; and now at noon-time, when the Sun is come to his Zenith, they are grown stark cold.

How necessary is it therefore to quicken one another to this Duty. Such an Exercise may be proper for  
the

*Heruo lac inter  
meditans, interq;  
crucem, inter  
delicias ubi  
et latet.  
Angel. Gazzus  
P. 259.*

*Aquam solis ro-  
rant, sub lucis  
aurum tepida  
ignat, medio die  
quam vehementi-  
ssimus est calor  
frigida eadem  
fluit, medio so-  
le servida ex-  
sultat. Q. Cur.  
l. 4. cap. 7.*

the restoring our former heat, and the recovering a sound constitution of mind.

The occasion of this Exhortation were some attempts made by the Gnosticks to imbase and corrupt the Christian Faith: although the name might be of later date, yet the thing was as early as this Epistle. They pretended to a more refined and sublimated knowledge then others were arrived at, which the Apostle tels them, *Puffeth up*, 1 Cor. 8. 1. They stiled themselves *spiritual*, and all others *carnal*, and therefore in the 19th. verse of this Epistle, it is charged upon them, notwithstanding this pretence, that they themselves (and not those whom they would brand with that mark) were carnal, not having the Spirit. Their false claims to the divine Spirit gave occasion for those words, *That ye be not shaken in mind, neither by spirit*, &c. 2 Thes. 2. 2. *Irenæus* tells us, they drew their Rise from *Simon Magus* who was contemporary with the Apostles. *Oecumenius* upon the place, that the persons against whom the Christians were animated here to defend the Faith, were the followers of *Simon*. These men crept into the Church, *παρεσιδοντας*, *verse 4.* by pretending to unusual severities, they did by degrees insinuate themselves. They made many meek condescensions to those whom they desired might become their Profelytes: we find them there in a very lowly posture, creeping upon their knees: The minds of the vulgar sort were so low, that they could not get into them without stooping.

Yet in the mean time their tongues were imploy'd in inveighing against the sacred Appointments of God, in speaking evil of Dignities, despising Dominion, *verse 4.*

B

He

*Irenæus lib. 1.  
cap. 1.*

*Lib. 1. advert.  
H.*

*λίγαι δὲ αὐτῶν  
ἦν ζήλωτες.*

He that considers the present danger the Doctrine of Faith is exposed unto by persons not much of a different stamp, will conclude for the reasonableness of this Advice, *Earnestly contend for the Faith once delivered unto the Saints.*

In these words three parts expose themselves to our view,

1. *An Aſſ contend.*
2. *The Object of this Aſſ, the Faith once delivered to the Saints,*
3. *The manner how this Contention is to be managed earnestly, after the manner of the Agoniſts; ἀγωνίζεσθαι. I ſhall treat of theſe in their order.*

1. Here is the *Aſſ* contend.

It ſpeaks the uſing your moſt ſerious endeavours to maintain the Doctrine of Chriſt, the oppoſing of every thing which may conduce to its prejudice, the expence of your parts, your Authority, your Eſtates, your Lives (if God requires) to maintain faith in its primitive purity: it calls to every one to come into the help of the Lord againſt the mighty, thoſe mighty and ſtrong deluſions which prevail with many to the eclipsing of the glorious Goſpel: during this preſent ſtate the Faith of Chriſt hath ſo many enemies to conteſt with, ſo many prejudiced minds, rebellious hearts, ſeared Conſciences, that if there be any bowels or love in us, we can do no leſs then ſide with him in this holy Conſliſt.

2. Here is the *Object* we are to contend for  
*Faith once delivered to the Saints.*

It is *Faith*, not the Faith whereby we believe, (though that merits our moſt vigorous contending) but  
the



the Faith which is believed by us; *The Doctrine of the Gospel*, 1 Tim. 4. 1.

This Faith either pertains to the *Foundation* of Religion, or else to the *Superstruction*; this Distinction the Apostle makes, 1 Cor. 3. 10, 11. If we would know what Faith belongs to the *Foundation*, the best way is to examine its Connexion with that which is of undoubted necessity to salvation: The Scripture mentions two heads, *Saving Faith*, and *Holiness*; without the first none can please God; without the second none shall see him: whatsoever hath an essential Connexion with these two is to be owned as a fundamental Truth, and whatsoever is repugnant, rejected as a fundamental Errour.

Heb. 11. 6.

12. 14.

By the light of this Rule a great part of *Sacini's* his Divinity will appear to be a fundamental mistake; for how can a man believe, and devolve himself upon God in the way of his providence, who is possessed with an apprehension of his not knowing future Contingents? How can a man believe and rely upon Christ, who conceives him to be but a mere man when the Scripture pronounces him cursed that relies upon man, Jer. 17. 5. As these Apprehensions are repugnant to saving Faith, so they will appear to be as contrary unto Holiness. The first prevents the Resignation of our Wills to the divine pleasure, the principal part of a holy life. The second destroyes the first branch of the Myserie of Godliness, *God manifested in the flesh*.

As for what belongs to the *Superstruction*, the Apostle hath ranked it under these heads, *Gold, Silver, Precious stones*: *Gold*, that is next to the *Foundation*, and therefore of the greatest value; then *Silver*,

B<sub>2</sub>

then

then pretious Stones ; Every stone in the Building is pretious ; though every Truth be not of equal importance in reference to salvation , yet every one hath his just price and value.

It is a Faith once *delivered*, once for all. Indeed it was gradually discovered to the world ; first in the Promise to *Adam*, then the Sun of Righteousness began to appear above the Horizon ; Then to *Abraham*. He was enjoined to offer up his Son, to signifie that the promised seed should break the Serpents head by being made an offering for sin ; in the very Act he was prohibited, to denote the time was not yet come for the manifestation of that seed ; A Ram, a principal Sacrifice amongst the appointments of the Law was substituted, to express Gods acceptance of that service in the mean time. The waters of life like *Ezekiels* waters did arise by degrees : in *Adams* time they were to the Anles ; in *Abrahams* to the knees, in *Moses* and the Prophets to the loines , in the times of the Messias they became a great River ; in time past God spake at sundry times, and in divers manners, but now he has spoken by his Son, most fully once for all in the New Testament. This is his last Will and Testament, which Christ as his only Son and Heir hath opened and disclosed ; he hath spoken by his Son whom he hath appointed Heir, *Heb.1.2.* This Testament being the last, will admit of no alteration , and therefore at the End of the book which concludes it, there is a curse pronounced against him who shall make any such Attempt ; *I testifie to every man that heareth the words of this Book, if any man shall add to these things, God shall add to him the Plagues which are written in this Book ; and if any man shall*

Eze. 47. v. 3, 4, 5.

shall take away from the words of the book of this Prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, Rev. 22. 18. By the Book of this Prophecy is not only meant the Revelation, but the whole Scripture which is sometimes called the Prophets, *Act. 24. 44, 45.* sometimes the Scriptures of the Prophets, *Rom. 16. 18.* and here the Book of Prophecy, because the greatest part of those, who were employ'd to pen it, had a prophetick spirit. The Revelation being now united and incorporated into the Canon, and the last part in order, what is thus spoken in the conclusion of it, must have Relation to the whole, *Cursed be he that maketh any Addition.* Moses who concludes the Law, charges the people not to add or diminish from it, but suggests that God would raise a Prophet like unto him, whom he enjoynes them to hear. *Malachy* the last of the Prophets foretels of Christ, and a Messenger before him, from whom further instructions were to be received, but *John* who consigns the Canon of Scripture, pronounceth an Anathema without the least intimation of any further discovery; he insinuates that the next appearance to be expected from Christ, is at his last coming to Judgement, *verse 20.* he that testifieth these things, saith, *surely I come,* and then the Church which was acquainted with the mind of Christs Answers, *Even so, Come Lord Jesus.* Upon this account it is exprest in the eleventh *verse,* *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still,* to signifie, that if men refuse to be reclaimed by this last Revelation, be it at their own peril, no other Gospel shall be made known to reduce them.

It is a Faith once delivered to the Saints, a Faith

not.

*Omnes Canonici libri veteris Testamenti scripti sunt a Prophetis.*  
*Vid. ubi sakeri contrarij. Q. est. cap. 5.*

*Deut. 12. 32.*

not *invented* by the Saints, but delivered to them, not the Result of Phantasie and Imagination, but the Product of the Eternal Counsel and Wisdom of Heaven it was sealed and delivered: sealed with the blood of Christ, and publickly delivered to the Saints.

Every Saint is Gods *Depositarious*, he commits this Treasure into his custody, he will one day call for an account of this Trust, and requires that we do not return that corrupt to him, which was given pure unto us.

Having thus made some general discovery of the *Act* and the *Object*, I will in the next place give some account, why this *Act* ought to be terminated upon this *Object*: why it is so much our concernment to contend for this Faith.

The first *Argument* may be drawn from the *Excellency of this Doctrine*: the second from the *Attempts of Satan to corrupt it*: The third from the *Resolution of former Saints to defend it*.

I. *Argument from the Excellency of this Doctrine*: this will appear, if we consider the Author of it, the Doctrine itself, the Effects it produced.

I. The *Author*, his name declares his most excellent nature, wonderfull Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. During his Manifestation here in the flesh, a divine Power or Spirit resided upon him, which did justify and acquit him from that disparagement which his humane nature might have exposed him unto; He was beheld and admired by Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, which was of no ductile Temper, by reason of those Prepossessions

1sa. 9. 6.

1 Tim. 3. 19.  
1a. 9. 6.

ons it was under by the Pagan Religion; after the spending a most holy life, the expressing the highest Acts of Grace to his friends, of love to his enemies, of zeal for his Fathers interest, he was visibly received up into Glory: This excellent person was the Author of this Doctrine we are to contend for.

2. *The Doctrine* it self, it is comprised in two words by the Prophet, *The Lord our Righteousness*, the Hebrew runs thus, *וזה אשר יקרה לה יהוה צדקנו* *Ier. 33. 16.* This is he, meaning Christ the branch, *אשר יקרה לה* which shall preach or declare unto her, meaning Jerusalem, for *קרה* signifies *predicare* as well as *vocare*, and *לה* is not in the Accusative but Dative case, *The Lord our Righteousness*, meaning the Gospel which Christ should preach and hold forth to the Church. These two words are the sum of the Gospell, the principal part of the Christian confession is that Jesus is the Lord, *Phil. 2. 11.* and his doctrine is still a word of righteousness. *Heb. 5. 13.* In every vein of the Gospel there is something of the blood and imputed righteousness of Christ. The excellency of these matters is so great, that the Apostle attributes an Eminency to the knowledge of them *τὸ ὑπερέχον*, *Phil. 3. 8. 9.* there is an excellency in the knowledge of arts and sciences but in the knowledge of the Doctrine of Christ there is an *ὑπερέχον*, a supereminent and superlative worth.

3. *The effects it produced without any external help or advantage.* The religion of the Jews did abound with temporall encouragements, *Mahomets* doctrine was calculated for depraved nature; but the doctrine of Christ has no such external advantage to Cominend it. It does not allure to obedience by promising the possession of a Land flowing with milk and honey (an argument:

gument fit for the Church in her state of Infancy) or the enjoyment of inordinate lust in paradise. The arguments it useth are of another strain, mortifie your lusts, do good to your enemies, return blessing for cursing, undervalue the delights of the world, deny your selves, take up the Crosse. I do not remember any rule in Rhetoric to which this example may be reduced.

O suasionem dis-  
suasus omnis  
undiq; plenam  
Anpuamus.  
Demosthenem  
Ciceronemq;  
detractatione-  
quicquid mper-  
sudi, recuti-  
quum potuisse,  
Marsilius Fici-  
nus de Christi.  
Relig. cap. 8.  
p. 9.

One would think such oratory should not prevaile with many to become profelytes; yet where this doctrine was preacht we finde 3000 Converted, the Magicians burning their curious bookes, *Felix* trembling, the oracles of the Devill silenced. No greater evidence of the excellencie of it then these miraculous effects, which were produced against winde and tide without the interposall of any extrinsick power.

If any shall inferre, if a divine power did so far interpose in asserting this doctrine, there is the less need of our contending for it, especially it being of a spirituall nature, and not so easily falling under humane cognizance.

All that I shall returne is this. if *Judes* exhortation (*earnestly contend*) was of use in those times, when this doctrine was vindicated and asserted by a miraculous power, then certainly of much more now when no assurance is given of such extraordinary appearances for heaven.

2. From the attempts of Satan to corrupt it.

Some footsteps of this we may find in the new Testament: *Hymenæus* and *Philetus* are made use of to strike at the whole doctrine by asserting the resurrection to be already past, if no resurrection or eternall salvation the faith delivered to the Saints will presently vanish, the



the mind will be as free for the unrestrained of error as truth, therefore the armour designed for the defence of the head is called the *Helmet of salvation*; implying that the hope and desire of the resurrection to life and salvation is a security against error.

Others were employed to compass the same design by decrying the necessity of all outward worship and ordinances. They gave it out, that it was indifferent what outward worship they had; so the purity of the heart was preserved; such were those among the *Corinthians* who made no scruple to sit down in the Idol-Temples. This is believed to be the reason of *Johns* Admonition, *Little Children keep your selves from Idols*. The Tempter knows, if all external worship, the solemn appointments of God (in which he hath obliged himself to make conveyance of his Truth) be taken away, or made indifferent, he can with the greater facility impregnate the mind with apprehensions repugnant to the faith of Christ. Left these designs prove abortive, he attempts the corrupting of the Christian Faith by a prophane mixture of Paganism. *Simon Magus*, and his Adherents were his principal Instruments in this design. This seems to be the reason of the Apostles caveat, *Col. 2.8. Beware lest any spoil you through Philosophy*. Philosophy here signifies the Doctrine of the Pagan Religion, which some endeavoured to incorporate into the Christian Faith. Such mixtures have always been attempted by Satan: if he cannot pull down the Ordinances, he will endeavour to imploy such in the dispensing of them as shall intermingle their own erroneous Conceits; if he cannot remove the golden Candlesticks, he will infuse what dross he may into

Grotius.



culiar to a Christian) was so well known to the Heathens, that with *Galen* it was grown a Proverb, when he would express an impossible thing, A man may as soon unteach Christians what they have learnt of Christ.

Θαῖνον τι τὸ  
ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ  
μαθῆναι διδοῦναι.

*Austin* relates when the Oracle was consulted by one how he might convert his wife from the Christian faith, that the answer was, he might as soon engrave letters on a swift stream, or fly in the ayr, as bring his desires to pass. This resolution of their's is a fit pattern for our imitation.

Before I proceed I must remove a *scruple*.

*Quest.* Must we contend for every branch and particle of faith? as for foundation truths they are worthy of Zeale, but as for others which are not of indispensable necessity to eternal life, we are apt to pronounce the expence of our thoughts and endeavors about them vain and superfluous.

*Ans.* Amongst those truths which belong to the superstruction, some are *neerer the foundation*, some are *more remote*; every truth calls for a measure of vigour and zeale suitable to its situation and nature, and every error a proportionable opposition; For

1. *The least slip in any article of faith portends danger to the whole*; if a man be at the top of a house where he is most remote from the foundation, in case his foot slip 'tis very doubtful, whether he will stop till he comes to the bottom. If a man lets his hold go in any part of the doctrine of Christ, 'tis very uncertain where he will stay; a little error imbaseth the mind, and by a hurtfull influence prepares it for the reception of a greater. The King of *Pontus* by taking at first weaker poysons wrought himselfe by degrees into such a constitution that he could concoct the strongest.

Efficit potus  
Mistridates  
sape veneno,  
Toxica ne pos-  
sens (sua nocere  
sibi.

2. *Though the being of a Christian depends upon his holding the foundation, yet the well being and comfort of his life lies in the superstruction: Though a house may have a sure foundation, yet if there be an error in the superstruction, if it be not contrived into convenient roomes fit for habitation, the Inhabitant will be deprived of the comfort of his life.*

3. *It is an argument of a selfish spirit to contend only for such truth as is of absolute necessity to its own salvation. Tis a sign it is moved by a private interest of its own, and not by the publick interest of heaven. Was there reward at all, yet the owning of truth (none of the least stars in the bright constellation of divine perfections) in every tittle and apex would be a piece of that homage we owe to God. These arguments speak our duty to contend for every branch of Faith, whether it belong to the foundation, or that which is built upon it. Although I would not contend so much for the state of a house as for the foundation stone, yet both are worthy the contending for; if the foundation be taken away the house must presently fall, but if the state which use to defend it against the importunity of the weather, it may in time fall and the foundation it self perish.*

Having thus opened the duty and the reasons of it; I shall in the next place, before I proceed to the Third particular, look back a little and make some inference from what has been spoken.

1. Observe, it is *Faith* we are to contend for, a matter of pure revelation, the eternal wisdom of God disclosed, a Doctrine given from heaven.

The heathen could tell us.

Ἰὼς ἀνίσταν' ἐν ὁσὶν ἰεραὶ ἀδύλα.

More then a superficiall regard is to be had to the  
Illustrious

Illustrious gifts of the gods. The faith of Christ is one of the Choicest gifts of heaven ; life and immortality are brought to light by it, the way into a communion with the supream good fully discovered.

2. It is a *Faith once delivered.*

Therefore, own it in opposition to the fancies of those private spirits which would deliver a new faith to us. They speak of a light within them which they own as their guide in this undertaking, and in the mean time neglect the sure word of prophesie. Whereas the scripture sayes to the Law and to the Testimony, they say to their inward light, their understandings being coloured with a false light, they look through it upon the scripture, and so make the scripture appear to them of the same colour; just as to men, that put green or blew glass before their eyes, all the objects round about will appear blew or green. They see by emission and not by reception; they do not fetch a sense and meaning from the scripture, but impose their own sense and meaning upon it. Let us not suffer our selves to be cheated of our faith by such pretences. Their suggestions must not be our rule, till they can demonstrate they are conducted by an infallible spirit.

All that I know which may induce any to the same belief with them, is either their confidence in asserting, their arguments in proving, or their voluntary humility in living.

1. As for their confidence and bare assertion that is nothing to us, The most notorious Impostors have been as confident and made as high pretences. *Montanus* used to boast of the inspiration of the holy Ghost, and had his *myrionidas*, women that preacht and set forth their prophesies, which he esteemed above the





well appointed from entering: It is the nature of error to fortifie the understanding which prejudice against every thing which may conduce to its dispossession: it has one peculiar advantage, the faith of Christ containing something in it above the capacity of a man, the reason of an erroneous mind does with more facility oppose it, then the best informed reason defend it. Villeroy

3. As for their *voluntary humility* their seeming disregard of the world, let not that impose upon us. Philos. devisa  
Apol. Thya.  
This is no argument to evidence their being under the direction of the spirit of truth. *Apollonius Thyaneus* who had acquaintance with an evil spirit (as may appear to any who considers what *Philostatus* who attempts to vindicate him from that crime represents of him) did raise his reputation amongst his disciples by renouncing worldly delights, by a severe and austere diet; he would drink no wine, use to feed upon bread and water. The devill is not so much a novice as to be ignorant that a pretended neglect of the world, a seeming humility are fit engines to raise and advance his own Kingdome. It is his common method, in the front of his design to place something which is really good, that he may with the more security make his access to the mind, and introduce what is really evil. He knows the best way to make men to take his poyson, is to mingle it with wholesome diet. *Delriot* tells us of one who was exhorted by the devill to read *Pauls Epistles*. Disq. mag.  
lib. p. 380.  
*Jacobus Vitriacus* of another, who was reprehended by him for his vicious and dissolute life. Tis a good rule to discern the spirit of God, from the spirit of Satan by; the spirit of God perswades nothing but that which is really good: the spirit of Satan may perswade some good  
but

*but alwayes mixes that which is evill. By this it is easie to discern, that the spirit these persons are under, is not the spirit of truth ; it perswades to a seeming neglect of the world, a mortifying of the flesh, yet in the mean time attempts to bring in ataxy and confusion, to overturn the ordinations both of God and man, a design the Spirit of God cannot be accessary to, for that is a Spirit of order, upon its moving, Gen. 1. 2. The Chaos vanished and all things were put into a comely and decent posture, whereas if this spirit of theirs had its liberty to move, it would force all things into their primitive confusion.*

3. This Faith was once *delivered to the Saints, the antient people of God*, and therefore we are not to part with it on easie terms. Will a man part easily with his Inheritance, the antient Possessions his Ancestors enjoy'd? *Naboth said to Ahab, God forbid that I should give the Inheritance of my Fathers to thee.* This Faith was the Inheritance of our Fathers, of those which were in Christ before us: the insinuations of every Jezebel must not perswade us to resign up our right in it.

1 King. 21. 3.

But possibly you'l put this *Querie*, who are the persons which are to contend for it?

*Ans.* That is intimated in the word *Saints*; to them it is committed as a special Trust, and therefore they are to contend, that they be not devested of it.

Saints may be reduced to these three heads, *Magistrates, Ministers, Private Christians.*

1. *Magistrates*; Indeed it was the speech of the old *Donatists*, *Quid Imperatori cum Ecclesia?* what hath the Magistrate to do with the Church? implying, as though a power did only reside in the Church

Church as to matters of faith : upon enquiry it will be found that an Ecclesiastical power resides in both. The power of the Magistrate is *objective ecclesiastica*, conversant about the things and affairs of the Church, but *modo politico* in a politick way and manner. The power of the Church, *formaliter Ecclesiastica* conversant about the same affairs, but *modo Ecclesiastico* in a Church way. Some have asserted the Magistrate to be an Officer in the mediatory Kingdom of Christ; all grant that he is an Officer in his essential, as he joynes with the Father and the Spirit in the general Government of the world. Now the world being upheld and governed principally for the Churches sake; The Magistrates Power which is ingaged in that Government, must needs have relation to, and be concerned to seek the Welfare of the Church, which can be done in nothing more, then in keeping the Faith of Christ free from Corruption.

Bochari.  
EpiR.

It is prophecied of the times of the Gospel, that Magistrates shall be nursing Fathers to the Church, *Isa. 49. 23.* which speaks a duty of care upon them, that the sincere milk of the Word, the Churches nourishment, be not poisoned with Errour.

We are to pray for those which are invested with civil Authority, that we may lead a quiet life in Godliness. Why is Godliness here mentioned, except those in Authority are to have an influence upon the promoting of it? And how can they be influential in this matter, except they exert their power in asserting against all Attempts the Faith of the Gospel, a Doctrine according to Godliness?

1 Tim. 2. 12.

That which is granted on all hands doth administer sufficient evidence to this Assertion. None can

D

deny

deny but that Magistracy is intended by God for the securing external Peace and Tranquility. Now he that appoints the end, doth at the same time give a right to the means conducing to it: There is nothing more conducing to the obtaining external peace and Tranquility, then the true and genuine influence of the Faith delivered to the Saints; for this excellently directs Superiors to govern, inferiours to obey, removes the fuel upon which the sparks of sedition use to kindle.

*Verulam.*

'Tis observed, that the matter of sedition is of two sorts, much Poverty and much Discontentment. He that is under the power of this Faith, is obnoxious to neither of these. He cannot judge himself a poor man that hath an interest in the purchase of Christ, or be agrieved at the meanness of his fortune, who is a Co-heir with the natural Son of God; under all Emergencies though he cannot rejoyce, yet his faith will learn him to be content; when others are in a Region where there is nothing but storms and thunder, his heart and life are above encircled with calmness and serenity.

There is an innate power in it, where it is obeyed from the heart, to keep men in those stations providence hath placed them. As in a Circle all the lines which are directly drawn from the Center to the circumference, never cross each other: so when men make God their Center, and are drawn forth according to the Gospel in a right line about their secular employments, they keep their proper place without molestation to those which are next to them.

Besides this inward power, there is an outward blessing

vid. Hookers  
Ecc. pol. 5 b.  
p. 494.

blessing intailed upon that community where this faith  
 is kept in its strength and vigour. The *Israelites* which  
 had it but in dark discoveries, if we compare them  
 with the demonstration and evidence of the New  
 Testament, did always ebb and flow in prosperity  
 according to their swerving from, or their more stren-  
 uous asserting of it against Idolaters. When this  
 flower began to fade, it was an undoubted prediction,  
 that a winter of Affliction was coming on. When  
 any storm did shake the State, it was usually made  
 by vapours which did proceed from coldness of af-  
 fection in this matter. While they kept close to the  
 revealed rule, their Counsels were happy, their at-  
 tempts full of Spirit; upon their neglect, an infatua-  
 tion fell upon those who were famed for prudence,  
 a disanimating fear upon persons of the greatest re-  
 solution, as great a change upon all as was in *Bel-  
 shazzar*, when he saw the hand writing, their loines  
 were loosed, their knees ready to smite one against  
 the other.

The ten Tribes after they had forsaken the appoint-  
 ments of God at *Jerusalem*, which were but shadows  
 of Gospel faith and worship, are represented al-  
 ways as in a tottering condition, as a reed shaken  
 in the water, 1 *Kin.* 14. 15. If it fared so with those  
 that forsook the shadow, what may be expected, in  
 case the substance be deserted; This faith is the *στυλος καὶ  
 ἰσχυρία*, the Pillar and Stay of a State, and there-  
 fore the Magistrate who is to uphold the one, can do  
 no less then contend for the other.

*Ministers*, they are likewise to contend,

In their *Doctrine*.

In their *Lives*.

In their *Doctrine*, not only by exhorting, but convincing Gain-sayers, *Tit.* 1. 9. Not only by building up the Church, but in keeping off the enemies which would pull it down: Their condition is not unlike that of the Builders of *Jerusalem*, who wrought with one hand in the work, with the other held a weapon: the policy and resolution of the enemy puts a necessity upon them to be polemical as well as practical. In their *lives*, by living as well as preaching Christ, by expressing life in their preaching, and preaching in their lives; by so preaching, and so living, that *Basil's* Epitaph may be verified of him, *Βασίλειος οὗτος λόγος,*

*Greg. Nazian.*

*Carmina varia.*

*rom 2. p. 153.*

*Sermo tuus 10.*

*niteru vilag;*

*fulgor erat.*

*ἀσθενὴς δὲ βίος.*

In a word, That they may contend to purpose, they must earnestly endeavour to get knowing heads and humble hearts. Many who know how to advance the work of God, yet wanting humility, which would make them stoop to the meanest Capacity, do not perform what they know: Many who have broken hearts, and yet are deficient in knowledge, are by that means unacquainted with the most compendious way to promote the design of the Gospel. Knowledge and Humility must not be divorced. Our hearts must be like *Gideons* pitchers, furnished with spiritual Lamps, and thoroughly humbled, and broken, before they will be serviceable.

Private Christians, these are likewise to contend in Prayer, in holy Communion, by provoking one another to walk according to the Rule of the Gospel. Every one hath his *πῶν ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀγγέλου* in his proper office, every star his own Orb, which must not be rashly deserted. When *Uzziah* broke his order, it is believed by the Jews, that at that time *Amos*'s Earthquake

*Hieron. in loc.*

*Joseph. Antiq.*

*Amos 1. v. 1.*



quake happened, nature her self seems to have trembled at such confusion. No man is a competent Judge, when he is to leave his own Sphear, and pass into anothers; every man hath a natural propensity to conceive better of his intellectuals, then the merit of them will bear. It is the observation of a Philosopher, that nothing is more equally distributed by nature amongst men, then Understanding and Reason; for every man thinks he hath enough. That mind which is never satiated with honour or with profit, would deem it a disparagement to be thought not to have wisdom and understanding enough. Upon this account 'tis not expedient that any should judge in his own case, when he is invested with sufficient ability to warrant the relinquishing his own, and the invading anothers place. This breaking our ranks, hath exposed the Faith of Christ to the assaults of the enemy. Let the magistrate continue in his sphear, the Minister in his, the private Christian in his; Let Magistrates and private Christians conspire to uphold a powerful Ministry. What disparagement soever men may think fit to cast upon it, yet in the thoughts of him who was both God and man, it was of that moment, that when he ascended on high, and as a Conqueror did (*spargere missilia*) distribute his bounty, he made choice of it as the most excellent gift, and cast it as a peculiar Testimony of favour to his own spouse, *Ephes. 4. 11, 12.*

I having thus directed myself to all sorts, do desire to leave this Exhortation with you, that every one which is a Saint, would remember Gods *Depositum*, what he hath committed to his Trust, that he may keep it as it was delivered in its primitive Perfecti-

*Nullares aequalitatem inter homines distributa, quam bonam mens.*

*Cartes. method. P. 1.*

on

Lib. 1. in Ca-  
lumbi interm  
Pl. 1021 p. 2.

en. Bessarion writes of Pythagoras that when he died, he left with his daughter in a large volume, the whole summe of his doctrine, with an injunction upon no terms to part with it. She was so obsequious, that although she was reduced to poverty, and had a great summe of money tendred for it, yet made it her choice, rather to suffer the inconvenience of penury then to violate her fathers commands. 'Tis a good pattern for our imitation; our heavenly Father hath delivered the doctrine of faith to all the Saints with the same injunction; let us be carefull to buy the truth, but sell it not.

And now I am come to the third particular, the manner how this contention is to be managed, We are ἑταγωνίζεσθαι. Ἀγωνίζεσθαι signifies to contend after the manner of the Agonists in their games and exercises; and ἐν is added to denote the intension or reinforcing of their action. The manner of their contending will appear from the Lawes they were regulated by, to which the Apostles alludes in these words, *He is not crowned except he strive νομίμως lawfully* 2. Tim. 2. 5. Amongst their νόμοι ἀθλητικῆς the Law they were obliged to conform to Three I observe very applicable to my present purpose.

Εὰν μὴ καὶ τοῦ  
θεοῦ βραμύ-  
των, &c.  
Theophyl. in  
Epist. 2. ad Tim.  
cap. 2. v. 5.  
κατὰ τ.

1. Before the Contest they were bound to prepare themselves by a set diet and to acquire ἔξιν ἀθλητικῆς, a good and full state, and habit of body.

2. In the Contest they had their bounds and limits on either side which they might not transgress.

3. At the end of the Contest they had their judge by whom doubtfull cases were decided, from whom no appeal was lawfull.

Βεβουλευθῆς

These rules will declare what our deportment ought  
to

to be before, in, and after our contending for the faith delivered to the Saints.

Before the Contest we must acquire *ἔξω αὐθαρχειν*, a good state and habit of mind as they did of body. Three Ingredients are requisite to make up this state, *Information, Purity and Peace.*

The mind must be well informed, Pure, Peaceable. well informed of these five things, 1. Of the Sovereignty of Gods will. 2. The infinity of his understanding. 3. Of his prescience. 4. Of the order and importance of all his particular truths. 5. Of the seasons when he requires we should openly contend for them.

1. Of the Sovereignty of the divine will. The great Mysteries of the Faith of the Gospel, being acts of Will and Sovereignty, having no necessary connexion with the holiness of the divine nature, are with difficulty entertained. None dare but own such Truths as have an immediate relation to the essential goodness of God; but those which result from meer pleasure and Sovereign will, are received but by few: The reason is manifest, his essential goodness hath the advantage of *innate ideas* within to make it known; His Sovereign Will appears only from Scripture without. Now these impressions, being nearer then the Scripture will naturally produce a more facile assent to what complies with them. Therefore he having displayed much of Sovereignty in the Gospel, in imputing the sin of the first *Adam*, the righteousness of the second; in preparing effectually grace for some, in not preparing of it for others; the ready way to arm the mind with resolution to appear in the asserting of such truths, which have not the help of an inbred notion to commend them, is frequently to meditate upon, and

and possess our selves with deep apprehensions of this attribute.

2. Of the *Infinity of his Understanding*. Some truths too big to be confined within a created mind, do cast a damp upon Zeale. Every one in the midst of his pursuit is ready to stop at them, as the *Israelites* did at *Amasa*. Men have an averfness from contending for and giving credit to that which they are not able to comprehend. 'Tis natural to desire not only to render a reason of our belief, but of the thing believed by us. The ready way to prepare the mind that it may be fit to engage for such truth, is to ponder the nature of an immense and infinite understanding: How unfit a finite being is to take a survey of it, how unable to penetrate its Counsels, to perceive the reason of all its Contrivances, that sometimes it is the interest and glory of God to conceal a matter, to teach us who are apt to judge of Divine things by our own measure, that there is an understanding far more excellent then ours that he steers by.

Despaign upon  
the Creed.

One propounds this Question; why sometimes in scripture Man seems to reason better then God? he instances in the story of *Abimelech*, *Gen. 20*. He himselfe is threatned with death, his wife and women-servants struck with barrenness, his whole family afflicted: In his own Justification he pleads the innocence of his family, the integrity of his heart, which God himselfe acknowledged; if man might judge, *Abimelech* seemes to have the better. The reason is obvious, we being men, easily understand his reasons who was but a man of a finite extraction, but we do not so easily comprehend the reasons of God, who is infinite. This is that which gives so great an advantage to the *Remonstrants*: They bringing the reasons of  
man

man; Arguments calculated for humane Capacity, are easily received but their Adversaries bringing the reasons of God, his standing upon his Prerogative, *Who art thou which repliest ? Upon the unsearchableness of his ways, O the depth of the riches, &c.* They are not so easily understood. Therefore in case we desire to receive and contend for the Faith delivered to the Saints, we must be well informed of the *Infinity of that understanding* which contrived it.

3. Of his *Prescience* the Characteristical attribute where-by he is distinguished from the heathen gods, *Isa. 44. 7.* Many are affrighted from owning branches of the faith delivered to the Saints by those strange consequences which others have attempted to pin upon them. We are told, that from the Doctrine of personal Election and Preterition without any previous motive, it will follow, that God is not cordial in his importunate intreaties, that he violates humane freedom, is accessary to mens enormities. These decrees being represented with such odious consecrations, like comets with a prodigious retinue, are believed by the overcredulous to presage a sad fate to Religion. That we be not checked by such vain appearances, when we enter the lists for this part of Gospel, let us be rightly informed of divine prescience, which is owned and acknowledged by both sides. Upon a strict survey it will be found, that the same charge which is drawn up against the forementioned appointments, doth as fully lie against the fore-knowledge of God: and therefore there is no reason it should cool our zeal for those decrees, but rather be pronounced the issue of a disordered mind, when it is as much against that Doctrine which all receive, as that Truth which some deny. This consideration will inspire us with resolution, and give the enemy reason to suspend his acts of hostility. When those, which beseige a place, see their friends set

upon the walls, consideration perswades them to cease from the expressions of warre.

4. Of the order and importance of all his particular Truths, to be able to distinguish betwixt the Mint and Cummin, and the weighty matters of the Law, betwixt the foundation and the remote parts of the superstruction. 'Tis the policy of the Tempter to invite men to spend their zeal upon Truth most remote from the foundation. He usually sets them as he did our Saviour upon the Pinnacle of the Temple, a part at the greatest distance from its basis. He doth all he may to draw our life and zeal from the heart of the Gospel into the external parts. If we look upon those heats which are betwixt persons of different persuasions, they are usually about such things as have small affinity with the grand points of Religion; they contest and quarrel about the bark and leaves of the tree of knowledge, and in the meantime the root that bears it, lies under ground without any notice taken of it. The wise man saith, *The eye of the fool is in the ends of the earth*, he is more acquainted abroad with foreign parts, then at home with those Truths which more nearly concern his salvation: The Tempter imitates the policy of *Josbua*, used towards the men of  *Ai* : He entices the persons he deals with as far as he can from the strong holds, and then rises suddenly from the ambush, and set's all on fire. Therefore it is the wisdom of a Christian to be acquainted with the order and importance of every particular Truth, to know where his strength lies, that he may stick close to that which is the spirit and life of Religion, that he may lend the greatest portion of zeal to that Truth which is of the greatest value.

This Affection is to be intended or remitted according to the quality of its Object. Sometimes God himself did appear in the cool of the day, sometimes in a burning Bush.



5. Of the *Seasons when he would have us openly contend for them.* We must not presently divulge every persuasion impress upon the mind. The Apostle saith, *Haſt thou Faith? have it to thy ſelf.* We are to conſider the perſons we deal with. All which profeſs Faith, are not of the ſame Elevation. Thoſe which are built upon Chriſt, are like ſeveral rooms built upon the ſame foundation; ſome are high, ſome low, ſome dark, ſome lightſome, ſome weak, ſome ſtrong; Every Diſciple is not of the ſame pitch, many like *Zachew* are but of ſmall ſtature; we are to conſider every one according to his meaſure; the ſtrong muſt not be fed only with milk, nor the weak invited to doubtfull diſputations, but rather conſtituted in that ſaving Truth they have already received.

**Rom. 14:31.**

Yfber of the u-  
nity of faith. p.  
14.

Our Saviour forbears to speak of some things which the people were not able to bear. The Jews say, it is unlawfull to speak of their מרכה the more abstruse part of Theology before any, but their wise men. *Cyril of Jerusalem* refused to expound some Articles of Faith to one not perfectly initiated, by reason of their sublimity. *Austin* saith it is advantageous to be silent in some Truths, for their sakes, who are not arrived at a capacity of receiving them. We are likewise to weigh the Errours which are to be opposed, the persons which vent them, the ends they aim at. Sometimes the unseasonable opposing of an Errour doth but increase it; the water which would slide away without any noise, if it be dammed up, rises and becomes considerable; That fire which would go out if let alone, being stirred and agitated, becomes a great flame,

**Maimonides**  
**More-neb.u**

In Procatich

ὡς ἔστιν ὁ  
 σωτηριεύων.  
 utile est ut sa-  
 ceatur aliquod  
 verbum propter  
 incapaces.  
 de pers. lib. 2.  
 cap. 16.

E 2

**Vidi**

*Vidi ego jactatas mota face crescere flammās,  
Et rursus nullo concutiente mori.*

Here is a place for Christian prudence to exercise it self in, to know the *Times* and *Seasons* when God would have us to make our Onsets.

2. *A pure mind*, the Mystery of faith must be received into a pure conscience, the new wine of the Kingdom must not be put into an old bottle, a mind not refined and renewed by the spirit. If there be holiness in the heart, it will put an excellent temper upon all our contentings, it will annihilate all that worldly interest by which most are animated, and make them no farther contend, but so far as an advantage may accrew to the glory of God. A person that hath light in his understanding, and hath not his Will and Affection ballasted with holiness, is waving and very uncertain, he will never last the Conflict; his zeal will die with his secular interest, he will no farther contest for the glory of God, but so far as he may promote his own. That he may become some great one, the head of a Party, he will work himself up to a great measure of zeal. This is the fewell which makes the fire burn: this being removed, his feaver will presently cease, these external weights being taken off, he instantly loseth his motion.

3. *A peaceable mind*. 'Tis no contradiction to be in a peaceable frame, and yet to contend: There is a great affinity betwixt *ἔρις* Contention, and *ἀγάπη* Love. *ἔρις* which signifies to express *Enmity*, is neerly related to *ἀγάπη*, which imports *the expressing of love*. No greater expression of Love, then for a man to contend with

with a person to dispossess him of his Error: he may be at war with the error, and yet at peace with the person; like lightning he may melt the sword, and yet spare the scabbard.

By a *peaceable mind* I understand a mind unwilling to make a breach upon every diversity. A mind that can more love others, because they shall all be of the same general Assembly of the first born in heaven, then dislike because they are of divers Assemblies here. The true Disciples of Christ ought to be like the Curtains of *Mose's* Tabernacle, which although they were not all of the same colour, some blew, some purple, some scarlet, yet all were coupled together.

Further by a *peaceable mind*, I understand a mind willing to condescend to the infirmities of others, so far as the interest of the Truth will permit. This Temper was very apparent in our Saviour, his Apostles, the primitive Christians. Our Saviour did so far accommodate himself to the Jews, that he borrowed their Rites, and implanted them into his own Ordinances. His appointments at his last supper seem to be an imitation of what was in use at their Passover and other feasts.

His blessing the Cup before and after the distribution of the bread, was an imitation of their double benediction; the first they called the *Sanctification*, the second, *The blessing of the meat*. His phrase, *this is my body*, is borrowed from their calling the Lamb, *The body of the Pasover*. His singing an Hymn, an imitation of the hymnes they were accustomed to sing after supper. 'Tis believed he used the same Psalms with them, beginning at the 113. and ending at the

Luke 22. 17.  
Fagus in Deut  
8. 10.

קדוש

ברכת המזון

גופו של פסח

*Pentua Bergen.*

*De hoc hymno  
ex istis sex  
Psalms com-  
posito intelligi  
debet illud,  
quod in immi-  
nente passione  
Mar. capite 26.  
legitur, &c.*

*Causaub. exerc.  
26. 396.*

*Quo facilius  
ad veniatis  
amorem cor-  
ruptas super-  
stitione mentes  
traducerent,  
verba sacro-  
rum illorum  
in suos usus  
transfulerunt.*

118. His Sacrament of Baptism answers to their ad-  
mitting Profelytes by water.

In the Apostles times the Deacons instituted by  
them, answer to the *Parnasin* in the Jewish Synagogues,  
The Angel of the Church to the publick Minister there,  
called *צבור שליח* *Angelus Ecclesie.*

The severall steps which the ancient Christians ap-  
pointed to be taken by those whom they admitted  
into their Communion, their *Catechumeni*, *Competentes*,  
*Fideles* were derived from the Heathens

*καθαρσις, μύησις, πλεισις.* Their calling the Sacraments, *πλεσις, ἐποπτεία,*

*πλεσις* was by way of accommodation to the heathens  
which gave the same names to their Mysteries. This  
carriage of theirs, was like the carriage of Parents,  
which use to suite their behaviour and speech to the  
age and infirmity of their Children. If these con-  
descensions were used towards Jews and Heathens  
on purpose to allure them to imbrace the Faith; what  
ought one Christian to use towards another, who  
have the same head, and ought to have the same heart.

In all this I intend nothing towards the asserting an un-  
worthy Syncretism, a compliance with others for peace's  
sake with loss and damage to the truth: We must follow  
the prophets rule, love truth and peace; first truth  
then peace. The wisdom from above is first pure,  
then peaceable. *Numa's* temple was stiled *πίστεως ἡ  
εἰρήνης ἱερόν*, the Temple of faith and peace; first of  
faith, then of peace. The sum of what I intend is only  
to perswade to a condescending deportment, a peace-  
able and meek demeanour, free from pride and in-  
fulting, a mutual love in our strivings for the faith,  
which would more prevail against Error, then ex-  
asperation and bitterness.

It

It was the wisdom of God to appoint ( when Christ and his Disciples were in the mount ) that *Moses* and *Elias* should appear to them, that the Disciples might learn their duty, in there contendings for the faith, to mix *Moses* meekness with *Elias* zeal. Immoderate Anger doth but disturb that reason God hath given a man to convince his adversary. The storms which passion raise, do but ruffle and make the passage uneven to him.

*The words of the wise are heard in quiet.* It was not a rough stone which sunk into the forehead of the Philistine. A well polisht Argument used by an even spirit, will make the deepest impression. When intemperate heats prevail amongst parties, there is reason to suspect, whether it be Truth they contend for. Such inordinate flames do not proceed from Gold, Silver and pretious stones, to which Truth is resembled, but rather from Wood, Hay and Stubble, which easily takes fire. 'Tis hotter under the Tropicks then under the line: In the extreme parts, where Errour resides, there is more violent heat then in the middle where Truth lies.

*These Preparations are required before the Contest.*

2. In the Contest we must be carefull to avoid extremes. This fault the Apostle ( alluding to the custome and Law amongst the Racers, ) expresseth by *reperiens* to extend a mans self or run over his set bounds 2. Cor. 10. 14. When we contend against an error opposite to faith 'tis easie to observe a secret propensity to fall into the contrary extream. *Arius* contending against

against the Gentiles plurality of gods, forced him into another extream of denying of the Divinity of Christ. *Sabellius's* dislike of *Arius* Tenent, did drive him so far to maintain an Identity of his nature with God, as to destroy the distinction of his person. A man is enclined to conceive himself most secure when at the greatest distance from his adversary. The *Philosopher* observes, that bodies in motion have a propensity to recede from their center: 'Tis true of the mind, when resolved against error, 'tis apt to fly from the center of truth towards the opposite point of the circumference. 'Tis visible how this inclination hath been managed and improved by the policy of Satan. Sometimes he raises the *Manichees* to defend a fatal necessity upon the Will; presently *Pelagius*, who so far proves an advocate for humane freedom, as utterly to annihilate the grace of God. He persuades the *Papist* that Christ's merits are so redundant, that by them men are enabled to merit and satisfy the displeasure of heaven. He makes use of the *Socinian* to defend there is no satisfaction at all; some he persuades that Justification is by the works of the Law; others that the Law is a thing out of date, of no use to one ingrafted into Christ. It was his former attempt to beget a belief that the Ambassadors of Christ could not be invested with too much outward pomp; and now instead of that double portion of honour, God hath allowed them, he confers upon them a double portion of contempt. *Plutarch* in his treatise about superstition, says, there are two extreams into which men are lead through their want of a true knowledge of the nature of the gods, Superstition and *Atheism*: formerly

the disorder  
beginning.



ly the design of the Tempter was to enervate the power of Religion by superstition ; but now he as strongly attempts the leading of men into the other extream, namely *Atheism*. As his design is contrary, so the means he uses.

Before he advanced the externals of religion, and now he casts disparagement upon them. Before he set up the institutions of men, now he pulls down the ordinances of God. He perceiving he could not bring us in love with humane appointments, that he might advance superstition ; indeavours to annihilate those divine appointments which are designed for the furnishing the mind with lively apprehensions of God, that he may bring in and establish *Atheism*. Thus you shall always finde him in some extream, walking at the outsidcs, amongst the tombes, where he may revive and give life to some dead error. Therefore it is good in the heat of contention to beware we be not suddenly transported beyond the just bounds and measures of truth. There is nothing more pernicious to the peace and wel-fare of the Church. When men overthrow themselves, when their opinions like Jonathans arrows fly beyond, it is a signification of imminent danger.

3. After the Contest we are to rest in the determination of the *Spacivorn's* or judge. We owne no supream visible judge but the Scripture : There are other subordinate judges, the Magistrate in his place, the Minister in his, the private Christian in his. The Magistrate may judge in order to restraining acts of violence committed by the outward man against the faith delivered to the Saints. The minister in order to the instructing the ignorant, directing the erroneous, confirming the

doubtfull. The private Christian in order to his own duty; that his faith may depend upon divine Testimony, that he may believe Christ more for his own, then the Testimony of others. Yet the Scripture is the only supream visible judge, to whom appertains the infallible deciding of all controversie in the matters of religion. Although as it directs our practise 'tis properly termed a rule, yet as it exhibits the voice of God, passing sentence upon mistakes in the concernments of Faith, we commit no incongruity to call it a Judge. This is the reason why passing of judgment is attributed to it, *Joh. 12. 48.* Why 'tis stiled a *living word*, a *Judge of thoughts*, *Heb. 4. 12.* a Judge is nothing but a living or animated Law. This word tenders a decision of all doubts, it doth not let pass the first controversie concerning its own Authority. Although the stamp of divine Authority be not equally evident in all the parts; yet it is plain enough to distinguish every piece from counterfeit coin.

If the Scripture be the only Judge, I need not express the benefit which will accrew to us by being willing in our contendings to be decided by it: all the difficulty is, how to discern what this Judge hath determined. Every party pretends to be acquainted with it: though the dreams be many, yet the interpretation is but one; all the Question is, how we shall find it out.

*Ans.* In order to this end, a double evidence is required; in the *Object* and in the *Subject*: That the *Object* may be evident, we are first to be informed of the importance of the words and Phrases. The mind of God in Scripture, is said to be a *Light or Candle* 73.  
*Psal.*

-Кейтінд'с ін-  
 Духовный.

*psalm 119. 105.* The words and phrases are the lantern in which it is contained. Many times the darkness of the Lantern hinders the shining of the light, and therefore we are indebted to those who have dived into the languages the Spirit of God was pleased to use, and informed themselves and us with the customs and manners of speaking which prevailed at that time when the Scripture was penned; without this method many portions of sacred Writ which are now disclosed, would have continued under their former concealment. For a miraculous appearance could not have been expected for the opening of them, seeing a full provision of means in preserving antient Records, in erecting Schools of Learning, hath been made by divine Providence for that purpose. This Expectation would have been as unreasonable, as for the *Israelites* to have lookt for the continuance of Manna from heaven, after by a divine hand they had been led out of a barren wilderness into a land of plenty.

The words and manners of speaking being understood, we are to weigh *the Circumstances of every Text*; The Spirit which is sent Ambassador from heaven to treat with us in every portion of Scripture, hath his Interpreter not far from him; usually some word or expression stands ready in the Context to explicate his mind.

*If the Circumstances be dark, we are to light them at other Scriptures which are clear and evident.* Passages in Scripture are like the stars, not all of the same magnitude. Those of the lesser are at no great distance from those of the greater, which without any diminution can lend them evidence. If nothing shall be accounted evident, because some or other have made divers glosses upon every Text, upon the same

account we may doubt whether the snow be white, because *Anaxagoras* was of a contrary mind; that he had not many followers, is no Argument of less probability for his opinion, then many have for their Conjectures. For I doubt not, if it had been as much the interest of Satan to perswade men that snow is black, as to misinterpret all those places which speak for the discriminating Grace, Divinity, Satisfaction, Ministry of Christ, but *Anaxagoras* might have had as many Disciples as *Arminius* or *Socinus*.

In order to the procuring evidence in the subject, it is the divine pleasure to assure the communication of such a measure of his Spirit in the use of means to his own people, as will enlighten their minds, and lead them into all truth which is of precise necessity to eternal life. He which bestows upon every Creature a Principle to distinguish betwixt food & poison, hath not left his people without a spiritual taste, by which they relish radical Truth, and disgust those glosses which tend to the corrupting of it; though they may be under the Conduct of their own spirit, when conversant about the superstructions of faith, yet they have the promise of an unerring guide in those things which relate to the foundation, which are of indispensable necessity to salvation. Therefore if we desire this Spirit may be a Guide to go before us through the dark passages of Scripture, 'tis good to apply ourselves to the use of such means which may help to possess us of it. When the Disciples had received the promise of the Spirit, they are reproved for standing idle and gazing about them, *Acts* i. 8. When the Apostle had received the Spirit it self, he doth not lay aside his former study and industry, he was solicitous

licitious about his books, 2 Tim. 4. 13. *consilio* the Syriack Interpreter translates a Chest of Books which he charges Timothy to bring with him. In the midst of all endeavours we must be importunate in prayer, which is powerfull in drawing down the aids of this Spirit, who knows how to loose the seals which are set upon any part of the Bible.

*Iamblicus* says, it was the custome of all prudent persons in matters of Philosophy, to begin with the invocation of God; it is of much more use in so divine a concernment, as the unfolding the Counsell of Heaven. The Antients use to repeat their dreams every morning before the Sun: were those dreams and Fancies which men take up in reading the word, repeated before the Sun of Righteousness, and he earnestly implored to detect by his Spirit the vanity of them, it would be the next way to be led into a right understanding of the Will of God.

The mind in all these accesses must lay aside its own prepossessions. *Socinus* saith, he went to God upon his knees for the interpretation of the 58. ver. of the 8. of *John*. No wonder he came away without any return from Heaven, who had no intent to find out Gods mind, but to confirm his own. He first believed the Trinity to be no way consonant to reason, and then attempted the bending of Scriptures into a compliance with that belief. He that would receive a clear answer from God, must bring a mind clear from prejudice, willing to submit to that light which confutes, as well as confirms his former conceptions.

And now I have run through the several parts of the Text, the *Ass*, the *Object*, the manner how this holy contention is to be managed; in a word, in all the

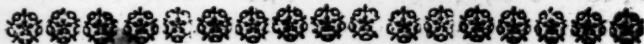
خبر  
تبع  
The cam li-  
brorum.

De vita Py-  
thagor. P. 1.  
Θείον δύντα  
ἐκ τῆς ἀνάγκης  
τῆς ἐκείνης

Τὸν δὲ Πυθαγό-  
ραν ἰδοὺς ἢν τῷ  
ἡλίῳ ἀντιπρο-  
τεῖν ἐν τῇ ἐκείνῃ  
Schol. in Seph  
Halel.

your contentings for the faith delivered to the saints,  
we are to use such a tenderness towards others as be-  
comes men, such a meekness as becomes Christians,  
such a fervency and ardour as becomes a peculiar peo-  
ple zealous of good works.

## FINIS.



## ERRATA.

**P** Ag. 5. l. 16. del. *his*, p. 7. l. 26. r. *Christ*. p. 11. l. 20. r. *attempts*. p. 14. l. 32. r. *ἀπο-  
βάνη* & *ἐπεισέτα*. p. 17. l. 2. r. *with*. p. 18. l. 6. r. *Ordinances*. p. 22. l. 12. r. *them*.  
p. 24. l. 19. r. *Apjll.* p. 27. l. 11. r. *some branches*. p. 28. l. 1. r. *commiseration*. p. 29. l.  
29. r. *that*. p. 34. l. 1. r. *himself*. p. 34. l. 3. r. *that teneat*, ( in being before Arius )

### In the Margent.

**P** ag 7. r. *Controu.* p. 9. *And this is he.* p. 10. *Plutarchus* without a stop, p. 13. *εὐστα-  
δίαν*, p. 16. *ἐνταγγέλιον*, p. 17. *τῷ σκληροδιδάτῳ* p. 24. *Platonis* p. 34. *δι-  
σιναιμονίαι*.



